



Connections

SPRING ISSUE - 2010

A Look Back to Move Forward

VolunteerNOW hosted its annual board retreat January 12, 2010. The board of directors used the day to thoroughly examine policies, operations, and the value of VolunteerNOW to the Macomb community. In order to move forward in 2010, the board reflected on its strategic goals and accomplishments in 2009:

- Added over 80 volunteer opportunities to the VolunteerNOW website, with over 11,000 website visitors viewing those opportunities.
- VolunteerNOW hosted the third annual West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference with over 90 leaders in attendance from across central Illinois.
- Strengthened our relationships with the Serve Illinois Commission. It was noted that there are two Serve Illinois Commissioners in Macomb, Al Goldfarb, and our own board member Nancy Jameson.
- Invested in a new display used to promote volunteerism at local events.
- Developed a financial stability committee to discuss the long-term sustainability of VolunteerNOW.

Our new goals for 2010:

- Take a more active role in partnering agencies and volunteers in the community
- Explore an event that would allow our agencies to give a presentation and publicize volunteer needs.
- Explore partnering with more organizations to actively meet the volunteer needs of the Macomb community.

The Board of Directors are committed to meeting the 2010 goals which they believe will continue to strengthen VolunteerNOW as it strives to enhance the quality of community life in Macomb.

Is VolunteerNOW needed?

In tough economic times, of budgetary cuts, VolunteerNOW is doing what we can to assure that the volunteer needs are met within the non-profit agencies that register their volunteer needs with us. With staff reductions budgetary cuts, many non-profit and social service organizations rely more heavily on volunteers according to the Independent Sector; cited reference by the Points of Light Institute. Volunteerism is becoming more than a nice thing to do in the community, it is becoming a necessity. Volunteers make it possible for these agencies to continue their service while faced with reduced resources. Thus, volunteerism plays a direct and valuable role in the backbone of our community... our community's health and quality of life.

What we do at VolunteerNOW

VolunteerNOW is a non-profit agency whose mission is to promote, advocate, and be a key resource for volunteerism in the Macomb area in partnership with agencies, organizations and institutions to enhance the spirit and quality of community life. As a non-profit agency, we operate at the lowest cost possible in order to continue to provide free services to registered non-profit agencies. These include publicizing their volunteer needs, promoting the importance of volunteerism in the community, and actively partnering agencies with volunteers.

The more than 50 local agencies, now more than ever, rely on the support of volunteers. The registered agencies keep us updated on the volunteer needs and we provide free advertising to promote those volunteer needs. VolunteerNOW informs the community of volunteer opportunities in the newspaper, on the radio every. Volunteers who contact the VolunteerNOW office are referred to our registered agencies.

West Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference

VolunteerNOW hosted the second annual West Center Illinois Volunteerism Conference. Nearly 100 central Illinois activity directors and volunteer coordinators were offered a series of comprehensive training sessions on critical issues of volunteerism. This state recognized conference on volunteerism provides appropriate tools for volunteer recruitment, retention and management, developing volunteer position descriptions, enhancing communication, as well as navigating grants and exploring collaborations. Each year speakers and attendees gather from local organizations, and from as far as Springfield, Peoria, and Chicago. Nora Baldner, keynote speaker shared her interest in and commitment to volunteerism and its importance to communities. The third annual conference is being planned for the latter part of October in 2010.

VolunteerNOW Annual Fundraising Dinner

VolunteerNOW promotes the importance of volunteerism in the community and helps to make sure that volunteers are prepared to serve, and that agencies are equipped to make each volunteer experience the best that it can be. VolunteerNOW could not exist with out the support of the Macomb Area community. The service agencies use volunteers to make their programs successful. Volunteers who wish to donate their time find opportunities listed on our web site. VolunteerNOW provides training for to improve the delivery of volunteer services. All of these activities are important to our community. Please support VolunteerNOW by attending the Annual Fundraiser Dinner, May 11, 2010: starting at 5:30 PM at the Wesley United Methodist Church. Enjoy a great meal and check out the silent auction and raffle items. Tickets are available now in the VolunteerNOW office for \$15.00.

VolunteerNOW Supporters

Financial contributions and other support provided by:

- Macomb Area Businesses
- Private Donations
- Annual Fundraising Dinner
- Illinois Campus Compact
- AmeriCorps*VISTA program
- City of Macomb

Your contribution can be mailed to VolunteerNOW at the address in the right hand column.

FUTURE

NEWSLETTERS

Would you prefer receiving "Connections" by "e-mail" or "hard copy"??

Let us know. Contact information in the right column.

Save the date!

VolunteerNOW Annual Fundraiser Dinner

**May 11, 2010
Wesley UMC in Macomb**

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Web: www.volunteernow.info AND

WIU Volunteer Services

Office of Student Activities

WIU. Phone: (309) 298-3232

Fax: (309) 298-2879

Email: makubasak@wiu.edu

Web:

www.osa.wiu.edu/getinvolved/volunteer/

VolunteerNOW in Action

Since our summer newsletter, the following are just a few examples of the many volunteer opportunities that were promoted on behalf of our agencies through a combination of newspaper, radio, and email:

- Summer Youth Leadership Program with the Macomb Park District
- One-on-one visits with residents at Grand Prairie Assisted Living
- Cemetery Clean Up with the McDonough County Historical Society
- Clothing closet at the Madonna House
- Angel Tree project at the Salvation Army
- Community Liaison for the McDonough County Red Cross
- Organic Garden and Composting Project at the Horn Field Campus
- Make a Difference Day at Western Illinois University

Is your non-profit organization not on this list? Contact the VolunteerNOW office to learn how we can better represent you!